The OECONOMY of LOVE a Poetical Essay by Dr. ARMSTRONG.

Insanire docet certa ratione modoque.

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THIS little juvenile Performance, was chiefly intended as a Parody upon ſome of the Didactick Poets; and that it might be ſtill the more ludicrous, the Author in ſome places affected the ſtately language of Milton.

THE

OECONOMY

OF

LOVE.

THY bounties, LOVE, in thy ſoft raptures when
Timelieſt the melting pairs indulge, and how
Beſt to improve the genial joy, how ſhun
The ſnakes that under flow'ry pleaſure lurk,
I ſing: if thou, fair CYTHEREA, deign
Gracious to ſmile on my attempt. Though thou
None of the muſes nine, yet oft on thee
The muſes wait, oft gambol in thy train,

Though virgins. Come, nor leave thy BOY behind,
Blind but unerring archer. HYMEN, raiſe
Aloft thy ſacred torch. Your gifts I ſing.

Ye youths and virgins, when your generous blood,
Has drunk the warmth of fifteen ſummers, now
The loves invite; now to new rapture wakes
The finiſh'd ſenſe: while ſtung with keen deſire
The madd'ning boy his baſhful fetters burſts;
And, urg'd with ſecret flames, the riper maid,
Conſcious and ſhy, betrays her ſmarting breaſt.

Yet nature not in all her ſons maintains
An equal progreſs. This with kindly warmth
Concocts to manly vigour ſtraight; while that
Pines, crude and chill, and ſcarce at laſt attains
Imperfect life. Some ſlight their varniſh'd ſteed,
And (wondrous inſtinct!) bent on manlier ſport,

Cope with the maids. ALCIDES thus, they ſay,
Roſe brawny from his cradle, while the ſnakes
Hung hiſſing round him, horrible and fell,
Sent by enrag'd SATURNIA to deſtroy
Her rival's hope: the mighty infant graſp'd
His ſpeckled foes, and ſmiling daſh'd them down
To hell, their native clime; the ſpumy gore
Blotted the frighted pavement. Early thus
Was future chivalry preſag'd.——Meantime
Others ſlow ripen: men there are who ſcarce
Feel the ſoft thrillings of untaught deſire,
While pallid maids ſcarce ruminate on man,
Till twenty; well if then. It boots thee much
To ſtudy the complexion, much the clime,
And habitudes of life. Meanwhile with me
Credit theſe ſigns. The boy may wreſtle, when
Night-working fancy ſteals him to the arms
Of nymph oft wiſh'd awake, and, 'mid the rage

Of the ſoft tumult, every turgid cell
Spontaneous diſembogues its lucid ſtore,
Bland and of azure tinct. Nor envy thou
Waking fruition while ſuch happy dreams
Viſit thy ſlumbers; livelieſt then the touch
Thrills to the brain, with all ſenſations elſe
Unſhaken, unſeduc'd. The maid demands
The dues of VENUS, when the parting breaſts
Wanton exuberant and tempt the touch,
Plump'd with rich moiſture from the finiſh'd growth
Redundant now: for late the ſhooting tubes
Drank all the blood the toiling heart could pour,
Inſatiate; now full grown, they crave no more
Than what repairs their daily waſte. But ſtill
There muſt be loſs, nor does the ſuperplus
Turn all to thriſt. For from love's grotto now
Oozes the ſanguine ſtream through many a rill,
Startling the ſimple laſs, that anxious glows

Inward, till bold neceſſity o'ercomes
Her fond reluctant bluſhes to conſult
Her nurſe, well vers'd in myſtic caſes deep,
At chriſt'nings oft diſcuſs'd: when warm'd with wine
The mellow matrons, by the midnight fire,
Lewd ORGIES hold; while naked roams around,
His torch high-flaming from the ſpicy bowl,
Luſt full of glee, and through each lab'ring breaſt
His ſacred fury pours. The SIBYL ſolves
Sagely th' alarming caſe.—The riſing down
Then too begins to ſkirt the hallow'd bounds
Of VENUS' bleſt domain. In either ſex
This ſign obtains. For nature provident
Now when both ſides ſtand equal for the fray,
This graceful armour ſpreads; and, but for this,
Excoriate oft the tender parts would rue
The cloſe encounter; now they fight ſecure

Thus harneſs'd, and ſuſtain the mutual ſhock
Of war, unhurt, for many a well fought day.

But if to progeny thy views extend
Paternal, and the name of ſire invites;
Wouldſt thou behold a thriving race ſurround
Thy ſpacious table; ſhun the ſoft embrace
Emaſculent, till twice ten years and more
Have ſteel'd thy nerves, and let the holy rite
Licenſe the bliſs. Nor would I urge, preciſe,
A total abſtinence; this might unman
The genial organs, unemployed ſo long,
And quite extinguiſh the prolific flame,
Refrigerant. But riot oft unblam'd
On kiſſes, ſweet repaſt, ambroſial joy!
Now preſs with gentle hand the gentle hand,
And, ſighing, now the breaſts, that to the touch
Heave amorous. Nor thou, fair maid, refuſe

Indulgence, while thy paramour diſcreet
Aſpires no farther: thus thou may'ſt expect
Treaſure hereafter, when the bridegroom, warm,
Trembling with keen deſire, profuſely pours
The rich collection of enamour'd years,
Exhauſtleſs, bleſſing all thy nuptial nights.

But, O my ſon, whether the generous care
Of propagation, and domeſtic charge,
Or ſoft encounter more attract, renounce
The vice of monks recluſe, the early bane
Of riſing manhood. Baniſh from thy ſhades
Th' ungenerous, ſelfiſh, ſolitary joy.
Hold, Saticide, thy hand! for thee alone
Did nature form thee? for thy narrow ſelf
Grant thee the means of pleaſure? dream'ſt thou ſo?
That very ſelf miſtakes its wiſer aim;
Its finer ſenſe ungratify'd, unpleas'd,

But when from active ſoul to ſoul rebounds
The ſwelling mingling tumult of delight.
Hold yet again, ere idle callus wrap
In ſullen indolence th' aſtoniſh'd nerves;
When thou may'ſt fret and teaſe thy ſenſe in vain,
And curſe too late th' unwiſely-wanton hours.
Impious, forbear! thus the firſt general hail
To diſappoint, "increaſe and multiply!"
To ſhed thy bloſſoms through the deſart air,
And ſow thy periſh'd offspring in the winds.
Unhallow'd paſtime!—though the factious chief
Oft brew hot inſurrection, rather hie
To bagnio lewd, or tavern, nightly where
Venereal rites are done, from DRACO's ken
Remote, and light of heaven; (as erſt retir'd
The heaving Gallic ſaints to the kind gloom
Of clift, or cave, or truſted barn, to hold
Forbidden ſabbaths) rather viſit thou

Thoſe haunts of public lewdneſs; oft though there
Sore ills diſmay. Purſe, or the golden pride
That decks thy finger, gorgeous with the ſpoils
Of MEXICO, PERU, and fartheſt IND,
Or watch, time meaſuring, oft ſubtracted fly
Sink in the dark profound. And oft, to cruſh
Thy ſlacken'd manhood, in the mid career
Of puiſſant deed, untimely ruſhes in
A forward boiſt'rous wight, and from thy arms
The paſſive ſpouſe of all the town demands.
Him, hung'ring after gold, nor words can charm,
Nor more perſuaſive wine: thy gold muſt pay
The violation of the public bed;
Or braver ſteel muſt prove thy manly arm,
In dubious fight. Yet well if here could end
The mis'ry: worſe perhaps enſues; a train
Of ills of tedious count and horrid name.
Such as of old diſtreſs'd the man elſe ſquar'd

To God's own heart, but that his wiles debauch'd
JERUSALEM's fair daughters to his flames;
Nor did he from the holy marriage-bed
Refrain his looſe embraces, when the wife
Of wrong'd URIAS he ſeduced; nor ſtopt
Till murder crown'd his luſt. Hence him the wrath
Of righteous Heaven, awaking, long purſu'd
With ſore diſeaſe, and fill'd his loins with pain.
All day he rear'd, and all the tedious night
Bedew'd his couch with tears; and ſtill his groans
Breathe muſical in ſacred ſong. What woes!
What pains he tried! but now this plague attacks
With double rancour, and ſeverely marks
Modern offenders: ſlily undermines
The fame and noſe, that by unſeemly lapſe
Aukward deforms the human face divine
With ghaſtly ruins. Though this breach, they ſay,
Nice TALIACOTIUS' art, with ſubſtitute

From porter's borrow'd, or the callous breech
Of ſedentary weaver, oft repair'd:
Precarious, for no ſooner fate demands
The parent ſtock, than (pious ſympathy!)
Revolts th' adopted noſe.——Such ills attend
Obſcene and bought embraces. Wiſer thou,
Find ſome ſoft nymph, whom tender ſympathy
Attracts to thee; while all her captives elſe,
Aw'd by majeſtic beauty, mourn aloof
Her charms, to them reſerv'd, alone to thee
Diſcreetly laviſh'd. Sacrifice to her
The precious hours, nor grudge with ſuch a mate
The ſummer's day to toy or winter's night.
Now claſp with dying fondneſs in your arms
Her yielding waiſt: now on her ſwelling breaſt
Recline your cheek, with eager kiſſes preſs
Her balmy lips, and drinking from her eyes

Reſiſtleſs love, the tender flame confeſs,
Ineffable but by the murmuring voice
Of genuine joy; then hug, and kiſs again,
Stretch'd on the genial couch, while joyful glows
Thy manly pride, and throbbing with deſire
Pants furious, felt through all the obſtacles
That intervene: but love, whoſe fervid courſe
Mountains nor ſeas oppoſe, can ſoon remove
Barriers ſo ſlight. Then, when her lovely limbs,
Oft lovely deem'd, far lovelier now beheld,
Through all your trembling joints increaſe the flame;
Forthwith diſcover to her dazzled ſight
The ſtately novelty, and to her hand
Uſher the new acquaintance. She perhaps,
Averſe, will coldly chide, and half afraid,
Bluſhing, half pleas'd, the tumid wonder view
With neck retorted and oblique regard;
Nor quite her curious eye indulging, nor

Refraining quite. Perhaps when you attempt
The ſweet admiſſion, toyful ſhe reſiſts
With ſhy reluctance; nathleſs you purſue
The ſoft attack, and warmly puſh the war,
Till quite o'erpower'd with love, the melting maid
Faintly oppoſes. On the brink at laſt
Arriv'd of giddy rapture, plunge not in
Precipitant, but ſpare a virgin's pain;
Ah! ſpare a gentle virgin! ſpare yourſelf!
Leſt ſanguine war love's tender rites profane
With fierce dilaceration, and dire pangs,
Reciprocal. Nor droop becauſe the door
Of bliſs ſeems ſhut and barricado'd ſtrong;
But triumph rather in this faithful pledge
Of innocence and fair virginity
Inviolate. And hence the ſubtle wench,
Her maiden honours torn, in evil hour
Unſeemly torn, and ſhrunk her virgin roſe;

Studious how beſt the guilty wound to heal,
Her ſhame beſt palliate with fair outward ſhew,
Inward leſs ſtrict, with painful hand collects
The ſylvan ſtore. The lover MYRTLE yields
Her ſtyptic berries, and the horrid THORN
Its prune auſtere; in vain the CAPER hides
Its wand'ring roots; the mighty OAK himſelf,
Sole tyrant of the ſhade, that long had 'ſcap'd
The tanner's rage, ſpoil'd of his callous rhind,
Stands bleak and bare. Theſe, and a thouſand more,
Of humbler growth and far inferior name,
BISTORT, and DOCK, and that way-faring herb
PLANTAIN, her various forage, boil'd in wine
Yield their aſtringent force; a lotion prov'd
Thrice powerful to contract the ſhameful breach.
Beware of theſe, for in our dangerous days
Such counterfeits abound, whom next to know
Concerns. And here expect no dye of wound:

No wound is made: the corrugated parts,
With ill-diſſembled virtue (though ſevere,
Not wrinkled into frowns when genuine moſt)
Relapſe apace, and quit their borrow'd tone.
Yet judge with charity the varied work
Of Nature's hand. Perhaps the purple ſtream,
Emollient bath, leaves flexible and lax
The parts it lately waſh'd. But hapleſs he,
In nuptial night, on whom a horrid chaſm
Yawns dreadful, waſte and wild; like that thro' which
The wand'ring GREEK, and CYTHEREA'S SON,
Diving, explor'd hell's adamantine gates:
An uneſſential void; where neither love
Nor pleaſure dwells, where warm creation dies,
Starv'd in th' abortive gulph; the dire effects
Of uſe too frequent, or for love or gold.

Now hear me, lovers! ye whoſe roving hearts
No ſacred nuptial chains have yet confin'd;

Attentive hear, and daily, nightly weigh
The counſels ſage, which thro' my raptur'd breaſt,
To you th' auſpicious heavenly muſe conveys;
The muſe, no ſoothing miniſter of vice;
Though now in ſportive vein to youthful ears
She tunes her ſong, to give inſtruction grace.
Attend, ye wife! no frantic Bacchanal,
No ſhameleſs bard of the licentious rout
Of ſluſh'd SILENUS, ſings.—What nature bids
Is good, is wiſe; and faultleſs we obey.
We muſt obey; howe'er hard ſtoick dreams
Of apathy, much vaunted, ſeldom prov'd:
For oft beneath the philoſophic gloom
Sly LEWDNESS lurks, and oftener mazy GUILE,
That with well-mimick'd love th' unwary heart
Lures to its fate, and hails while it betrays!
There bloated PRIDE too dwells, and baneful HATE,
And dark REVENGE, than which a deadlier fiend

Ne'er pour'd its venom through a human breaſt;
Far hence be theſe; we know great NATURE's power,
Mother of things, whoſe vaſt unbounded ſway
From the deep center all around extends
Wide to the flaming barriers of the world.
We feel her power: we ſtrive not to repreſs
(Vainly repreſs'd, or to deformity)
Her lawful growth: ours be the taſk alone
To check her rude excreſcences; to prune
Her wanton overgrowth; and where ſhe ſports
In ſhapes too wild, to lead her gently back,
With prudent hand, to better form and uſe.

For wiſeſt ends this univerſal power
Gave appetites: from whoſe quick impulſe life
Subſiſts; by which we only live; all life
Inſipid elſe, unactive, unenjoy'd.
Hence too this peopled earth; which, that extinct,

That flame for propagation, ſoon would roll
A lifeleſs maſs, and vainly cumber heaven.
Then love of pleaſure ſways each heart, and we
From that no more than from ourſelves can fly.
Blameleſs when govern'd well. But where it errs,
Extravagant, and wildly leads to ill,
Public or private; there its curbing power
Cool reaſon muſt exert.——This leſſon weigh,
Ye tender pairs. Indulge your gentle flames,
Each fondeſt wiſh, and bathe your ſouls in love.
But let diſcretion guard the hour of bliſs,
Virtuous in pleaſure. So you ſhall enjoy
Pleaſure unmix'd, and without thorn the roſe.
This caution ſcorn'd, beware the event perverſe:
Expect, for pleaſure, pain and ſharp remorſe;
For love, averſion and each broken vow;
The jeſt of fools, the pity of the wiſe.

Be ſecret lovers. Let no dangerous ſpy
Catch your ſoft glances: as oblique they deal
Mutual contagion, darting all the ſoul
In miſſive love; nor hear your lab'ring ſighs
But chiefly when the high-wrought rapture calls,
Impatient, to ſoft deeds, then, then retire
From every mortal ken. The Sapient King,
(Whoſe loves who could defame?) in the mild gloom,
Deep in the center of his gardens, hid,
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian ſpouſe.
Find then ſome ſoft obſcure retreat, untrod
By mortals elſe, where thick embow'ring ſhades
Condenſe to darkneſs and embrown the day;
There, ſafe from all profane acceſs purſue
Love's baſhful rites. For oft the curious eye
Of prying childhood, and th' aſpect malign,
Waning and wan, of virgin ſtale in years,
Shed baneful influence on the rites of love.

And thou, my ſon, when floods of mellowing wine
And ſocial joys have looſen'd all thy breaſt;
When every ſecret guſhes; this at leaſt,
This one reſerve, of love and bounteous charms
Of truſting beauty; ventering all for thee,
For thy delight her fortune and her fame;
For her thou nothing. Hold! ingrateful, hold
Thy wanton tongue! Leave to the laſt of fools,
Of villains! that ungenerous vanity,
Cruel and baſe, to vaunt of ſecret joys;
Of joys on thee, ſo vaunting, ill beſtowed.
O dare not thus with mortal ſting to wound
The tender hapleſs ſex! Does thy vile breath
So blaſt my ſiſter's or my daughter's fame, —
By Heav'n thou dieſt! thy treacherous blood alone
Can waſh my honour clean. Prudent, meantime,
Ye generous maids, revenge your ſex's wrong;
Let not the mean deſtroyer e'er approach

Your ſacred charms. Now muſter all your pride,
Contempt, and ſcorn, that, ſhot from beauty's eye,
Confounds the mighty impudent, and ſmites
The front unknown to ſhame. Truſt not his vows,
His labour'd ſighs, and well-diſſembled tears,
Nor ſwell the triumph of known perjury.

Meanwhile, my ſon, if angry fate, or love
Grown indiſcreet, or loud LUCINA, tell
Th' important ſecret: is thy mate well form'd,
Virtuous, and equal for thy lawful bed,
Save her, I charge thee, from foul infamy,
And lonely ſhame: let wedlock's holy tie
Legitimate th' indiſſoluble flames.
If abject birth, diſhonourable, and mind
Incultivate or vicious, to that height
Forbid her hopes to climb; at leaſt ſecure
From penury her humble ſtate, by thee

Elſe humbled more, and to neceſſity,
Stern foe to Virtue, Fame, and Life betray'd,
A helpleſs prey. O! let no parent's woe,
No plaints of truſting innocence, nor tears
Of pining beauty, blaſt thy guilty joys.
Shall ſhe, ſo late the ſoftener of thy life,
Thy chief delight, whoſe melting eſſence oft
Lay with thy melting eſſence kindly mix'd
(As far as bodies and embodied ſouls
Can mingle); ſhe who deem'd thy vows ſincere,
Thy paſſion more than ſelfiſh, and thy love
To her devoted, as was her's to thee;
Shall ſhe (O! cruel perfidy!) at laſt,
When with her tainted name the winds grow ſick,
When envious prudery chides, affecting ſcorn
Of natural joys, and they of public fame,
Inſulting, hail her ſiſter; while each friend
Diſguſted flies; ſhall ſhe not find in thee

Unſhaken amity? when to thy arms,
Well-known, with wonted confidence ſhe flies,
To pour her ſorrows forth, and ſooth her cares,
Shall ſhe then find thy faithleſs heart from home,
From her eſtrang'd? at that diſaſtrous hour
Wilt thou ungently ſpurn her from thy love?
To waſte in ſickly grief her once-priz'd charms,
Forlorn to languiſh out her life, to lead
Deſpis'd, unwedded, her diſhonour'd days?
Or, if her barren fortune, hard like thee,
Scowls meagre Want (whoſe iron empire Pride,
Reluctant, and her offspring Modeſty,
Bluſhing at laſt obey) unſkill'd in arts
Of mercenary VENUS, to increaſe
The rompiſh band, that, without pleaſure lewd,
With deep-felt ſorrow gay, through TRIVIA's reign
Nightly ſolicit lovers; oft repuls'd,
Oft, when invited to the barren toil,

Thankleſs deſerted by their ſlippery loves!
Or to the ſalt of years, where tedious luſt
Uncouth and monſtrous creeps through freezing loins,
Patient ſubmitted! to the boiſt'rous will
Of midnight ruffians! to abhorr'd diſeaſe,
Hourly expos'd, and DRACO's fiercer rage!
Spare, mighty DRACO! ſpare a hapleſs race,
By their own ſex to wretchedneſs betray'd.
A woman bore thee; by each tender name
Of woman ſpare! haſt thou or daughter fair,
Or ſiſter? they, but for a happier birth,
The gift of fate, and honour's guardian, Pride
Early inſpir'd, had ſwell'd the common ſtream.
While ſhe whom now thy awful name diſmays,
Portentous heard from far, with fortune's ſmiles
And fair example, might have grac'd thy bed,
A virtuous mate, in every charm complete.

A pious duty next, neglected oft,
Demands my ſong. If from thy ſecret bed
Of luxury unbidden offſpring riſe,
Let them be kindly welcom'd to the day.
'Tis nature bids. To nature's ſacred voice
Attend; and from the monſter-breeding deep,
The ravag'd air, and howling wilderneſs,
Learn parent virtues. Shall the growling bear
Be more a ſire than thou? an infant once,
Helpleſs and weak, but for paternal care,
Thou hadſt not liv'd to propagate a race
To miſery, to reſign to ſtep-dame fate
Perhaps a worthier offſpring than thy ſire
Tenderly rear'd. For from the ſtol'n embrace,
Untir'd with worn acquaintance, keenly urg'd,
Elate with gen'rous rapture, likelieſt ſprings
The nobleſt breed, moſt animated, beſt.
What heros hence have iſſued! what fam'd chiefs!

And demi-gods, of old! the ſtealth of love
Gave grace her HERCULES, and mighty Rome
Firſt roſe beneath a random ſon of MARS.
Thy vigour too, the bloſſom of thy ſtrength,
Reckleſs and wild profus'd, in dangerous days;
Or in the ſenate wiſe, and nobly warm
To public good, may ſave the ruſhing ſtate;
Or, bold in arms, may roll her thunders forth
To ſhatter diſtant ſkies, and, rous'd to blood,
Uſher the Britiſh Lion to the field.
Thy country claims thy care; nurſe well her hopes,
And thine; nor thou her church's hungry wolves,
Night OVERSEERS, with thy own children's gore
Satiate, if rapine know ſatiety.
For bred to death, and of ſagacious noſe,
A prowling herd, lur'd with the recent ſmell
Of ſecret birth, their carnage ſweet, or led
By infant wailings, querulous and ſhrill,

Beſet thy frighted gates. Theſe timely thou
Prevent, or mourn too late thy raviſh'd gold
And captive ſon; to the ſtreet-dunning tribe
Of mendicants let out, fictitious badge
Of low diſtreſs: there to what life of pain
Led up who knows? to what diſgraceful fate,
What gibbet, bred? or from his parent's arms,
With nurſe unpitying, unbenign, exil'd
To ſqualid lodge, to find in FAMINE's cave
A ling'ring death; or by a deadlier hag,
Than her that rides the lab'ring night oppreſs'd,
Untimely ſink beneath a heavier fate.
While they, the ſons of licens'd rapine, ſcreen'd
Under the altar of the God of life
With murder ſtain'd, on what ſhould raiſe thy ſon
Nightly regale, carnivorous: for them
The heifer bleeds, or for her ſlaughter'd young
Roams wild the woodland bounds; and what ſhosld now

To thy young hopes run ſoft in balmy rills
Lacteous, to them in deep OPORTO flows,
Or hot MADEIRA. Thus the ſanguine feaſt
They crown, nor dread the cry of infant blood.

Theſe precepts wiſely keep, by theſe direct
Thy ſteps thro' pleaſure's labyrinth. Unhurt
And unoffending, thus thy tutor'd feet
May tread the wilds of elſe deluſive joy.
So ſhall no ſorrows wound, no ruder cares
Diſturb thy pleaſures, no remorſeful tears
Attend thy gay delight: nor ſighs make way,
But ſuch as heave the pleaſure-burden'd breaſt,
As utter love, with ſpeechleſs eloquence
Well underſtood; and breathe from ſoul to ſoul
The ſoft infection, fondly ſtill receiv'd.
Almighty Love! O unexhauſted ſource
Of univerſal joy! firſt principle

Of nature all-creating! harmony,
By which her mighty movements all are rul'd!
Soft tyrant of each element, whoſe ſway
Reſiſtleſs through the wilds of air is felt,
Through earth, and the deep empire of the main!
Thy willing ſlaves, we own thy gentle power,
In us ſupreme, with kind endearments rais'd
Above the merely ſenſual touch of brutes.
By thy ſoft charm the ſavage breaſt is tam'd,
The genius rais'd. Thy heavenly warmth inſpires
Whate'er is noble, generous, or humane,
Or elegant; whate'er adorns the mind,
Graces or ſweetens life: and without thee,
Nothing or gay or amiable appears.

Yet not to Love (thus poliſhing the ſoul,
Thus charming; though of every finer breaſt
The ſovereign joy), yet not to Love alone

Yield languid all your hours. The ſelf-ſame cates
Still offer'd, ſoon the appetite offend;
The moſt delicious ſooneſt. Other joys,
Other purſuits, their equal ſhare demand
Of cultivation. Theſe with kindly change
Will cheer your ſweetly-varied days; from theſe
With quicker ſenſe you ſhall and firmer nerves
Return to Love, when Love again invites.
Be thoſe the leaſt neglected which inform
With virtue, ſenſe, and elegance, the mind:
Thoſe what before was amiable improve,
And lend to Love new grace and dignity.
Life too ſerious cares, which madly ſcorn'd,
The means of pleaſure melt.—And age will come,
When Love, alas! the flower of human joys,
Muſt ſhrink in horrid froſt. O hapleſs he!
Thrice hapleſs then! whoſe only joy was that:
Whoſe young deſires tumultuous ſtill engage

To wield a load of unobedient limbs,
With vain attempt. Him the inclement power
Of craving impotence, to fonder toys
Than other dotage knows, or eaſy-dup'd
Credulity can well believe, incites.
Him all the Nymphs deſpiſe, and the young Loves
With leering ſcorn behold; while vigorous heat
Has fled his ſhaken limbs, ſurviving ſtill
In his green fancy. Thence what deſperate toil
By flagellation, and the rage of blows,
To rouſe the VENUS loitering in his veins!
Fruitleſs, for VENUS unſolicited
The kindeſt ſmiles, abhorring painful rites.
Ceaſe, reverend fathers! from thoſe youthful ſports
Retire, before unfiniſh'd feats betray
Your ſlacken'd nerves. The hoary years, deſign'd
For wiſdom, for ſedate philoſophy,
And contemplation, ill agree with love.

Cheerful retire: nor grudge in peeviſh ſaws,
Like envious monitors, the ſprightly joys
Of luſty youth. You had your genial time
Of pleaſure;——ours is on the rapid wing!

And you whoſe youthful blood impetuous rolls,
With generous ſpirits fraught and kindly balm,
Huſband your vigour well; if aught or health,
Or offspring numerous, beautiful, and ſtrong,
Or pleaſure weigh. For from the trite embrace
Follow faint relaxation, ſtrength impair'd,
Diſguſt, and mutual apathy, Love's bane.
Some boaſt, I know, their vigour to renew,
And keen deſire, by food reſtorative,
Or pharmacy more noxious. ORCHIS hence,
Laſcivious bulb, SATYRION better nam'd;
And that maritime, which the ſea-born Queen
Feeds with her native ſpume, ERYNGO, mild;

BOLETUS, fam'd among the fungous tribe;
And fell CANTHARIDES; in various forms
Are us'd. But what enſues? Diſeaſes more
Than ever burden'd AUSTER's drooping wings.
Cold TREMORS, SPASMS, and CEPHALÆAS dire,
Eternal flux of nature's balmy dew,
TABES, and gaunt MARASMUS, hideous loſs
Of godlike reaſon, and th' impriſon'd rage
Of fierce LIPYRIA, whoſe collected fires
The vitals only ſeize. Or if the ſons
Of jaded luxury thoſe plagues eſcape,
They waſte their melting youth, and bring grey hairs
Before their time, grey hairs and idle years.
Leave Nature to herſelf, nor covet more
Than Nature gives, that but to real wants
Each well-conducted appetite provokes.

But chiefly thee, fair nymph, behoves to know
That love and joy, when in their prime, muſt fear
Decay, the fate of all created things.
Be frugal then; the coyly-yielded kiſs
Charms moſt, and gives the moſt ſincere delight.
Cheapneſs offends; hence on the harlot's lip
No rapture hangs, however fair ſhe ſeem,
However form'd for love and amorous play.
Hail MODESTY! fair female honour hail!
Beauty's chief ornament, without whoſe charm
Beauty diſguſts; or gives but vulgar joys.
Thou giv'ſt the ſmile its grace; the heighten'd kiſs
Its balmy eſſence ſweet! and, but for thee,
The very raptures of the lawful bed
Were outrage and foul riot, rites obſcene!
Celeſtial maid! be it lawful that with lips
Profane I name thee, and in wanton ſong.
But in theſe vicious days great Nature's laws

Are ſpurn'd; eternal VIRTUE, which nor time
Nor place can change, nor cuſtom changing all,
Is mock'd to ſcorn; and lewd ABUSE inſtead,
Daughter of night, her ſhameleſs revels holds
O'er half the globe, while the chaſte face of day
Eclipſes at her rites. For man with man,
And man with woman (monſtrous to relate!)
Leaving the natural road themſelves debaſe
With deeds unſeemly, and diſhonour foul.
BRITONS, for ſhame! be male and female ſtill.
Baniſh this foreign vice; it grows not here;
It dies neglected; and in clime ſo chaſte
Cannot but by forc'd cultivation thrive.
So cultivated ſwells the more our ſhame,
The more our guilt. And ſhall not greater guilt
Meet greater puniſhment and heavier doom:
Not lighter for delay. Did JUSTICE ſpare
The men of SODOM erſt? like us they ſinn'd,

Like us they ſought the paths of monſtrous joy;
Till, urg'd to wrath at laſt, all-patient Heaven
Deſcending wrapt them in ſulphureous ſtorm,
And where proud palaces appear'd, the haunts
Of luxury, now ſleeps a ſullen pool:
Vengeful memorial of Almighty ire,
Againſt the ſons of lewdneſs exercis'd!

THE END.